

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 01129 141333Z

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FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3479

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1129

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG PFOR IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQ AND COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT

REF: (A) BAGHDAD 1079 (NOTAL), (B) BAGHDAD 1109 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. ON EVE OF COLOMBO SUMMIT, GOI APPROACH TO NON-ALIGNED FAMILY REMAINS REMARKABLY PRAGMATIC AND CONSTRUCTIVE. THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT SADDAM HUSSAIN MAY ELECT NOT TO GO TO COLOMBO--EITHER BECAUSE LEFT-WING BAATHIS REGARD HIS APPROACH AS TOO MODERATZTOR BECAUSE IRAQI PROPOSALS ARE NOT RECEIVING WIDE SUPPORT BY THE NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS AT COLOMBO. END SUMMARY.

2. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. IRAQI PRESS OF AUGUST 12 HAS LENGTHY REPORTING ON IRAQ'S PROPOSALS AT COLOMBO AND REVIEW OF FOREIGN MINISTER SAADOUN HAMMADI'S PRE-SUMMIT ACTIVITIES. THUS HAMMADI IS REPORTED TO HAVE MET SEPARATELY AUGUST 11 WITH YUGOSLAV AND NORTH KOREAN FOREIGN MINISTERS. AT ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING MORNING OF SAME DAY, IRAQI DELEGATION CALLED FOR UNIFIED ARAB APPROACH TO PALESTINE AND LEBANON. AUGUST 12 SEMI-OFFICIAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BAGHDAD OBSERVER LAID STRESS ON LARGE NUMBER OF PROPOSALS MOVED BY
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PAGE 02 BAGHDA 01129 141333Z

IRAQ FOR CONSIDERATION AT MINISTERIAL MEETINGS PRIOR TO SUMMIT.
ARTICLE FOCUSED ON IRAQI PROPOSALS REGARDING (A) CREDENTIALS

FOR MEMBERSHIP IN NON-ALIGNED COMMUNITY,,6(B) (C) CONDEMNATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN RACISM, (D) STATUS OF PLO WHEN APPEARING BEFORE UN SECURITY COUNCIL, AND (E) ZONE OF PEACE IN INDIAN OCEAN. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: OF ONE THINKS BACK TO FIRE-BREATHING IRAQI OF THREE OR FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN IT WAS TERROR OF PERSIAN GULF AND ALL AROUND BULLY BOY, PRAGMATIC TONE AND GOALS OF SOME IRAQI PROPOSALS FOR COLOMBO ARE REMARKABLY MODERATE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. THIS IS PARTICULARLY SO IN REGARD TO CREDENTIALS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN NON-ALIGNED COMMUNITY, IF APPLIED LITERALLY, IRAQ'S CRITERIA OF NO PARTICIPATION IN MILITARY OR SEMI-MILITARY PACTS WILL SURELY CREATE PROBLEMS FOR IRAQ VIS A VIS NORTH KOREA AND POSSIBLY CUBA AS WELL.

4. EVERYTHING WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT IRAQI APPROACH TO COLOMBO LEADS US TO CONCLUDE IRAQIS ARE MAKING SOBER, ALL-OUT EFFORT TO ACHIEVE REAL RESULTS, TO APPEAR A LEADER, SEEKING AND ACCEPTING CONSENSUS APPROACH ON SENSITIVE ISSUES. IN SO DOING GOI CLEARLY RUNS RISK OF ALIENATING ITS MORE EXTREME FOREIGN FRIENDS AS WELL AS DISCONFITING SOME DOMESTIC POLITICAL FORCES.

5. THEREIS SOME EVIDENCE THAT GOI, AND ESPECIALLY RCC VICE-CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSAIN MAY FEAR THAT REGIME IS INDEED FALLING TOO QUICKLY INTO A MODERATE POSTURE. THUS, AT RECEPTION EVENING OF AUGUST 11, USINTOFF WAS TOLD BY SRI LANKAN EMBOFF THAT SADDAM HAS DEFINITELY DECIDED AGAINST PERSONAL APPEARANCE AT COLOMBO. SRI LANKAN DIPLOMAT CITED SADDAM'S CONCERN THAT HE IS MOVING TOO FAR AND TOO FAST FOR THE LEFTIST WING OF RULING BAATH PARTY.

6. IF SADDAM DECIDES NOT TO GO TO COLOMBO (AND IT WILL BE THREE MORE DAYS BEFORE WE CAN BE SURE), THIS WILL CERTAINLY CONSTITUTE CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE OF POWERFUL DISCONTENT WITHIN THE BAATH WITH ONE OR OTHER ASPECT OF PREVIOUS GOI APPROACH TO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT. WIDESPREAD
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PAGE 03 BAGHDA 01129 141333Z

LACK OF OTHER NATIONS' SUPPORT FOR IRAQ'S PROPOSALS UQIF SUCH TURNS OUT TO BE CASEL MIGHT, HOWEVER, IN ITSELF CAUSE SADDAM NOT TO GO TO COLOMBO -- ENTIRELY APART FROM ANY FEAR OF THUNDER ON THE DOMESTIC LEFT.

7. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS: FOLLOWING UP ON BAGHDAD CORE GROUP MEETING ON NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT ATTENTION TO NORTH KOREA'S PROPOSALS, WHICH WAS HELD IN BAGHDAD UNDER JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S CHAIRMANSHIP AUGUST FIRST (REF. A), CANADIAN EMBASSY SOUGHT INSTRUCTIONS AND WAS TOLD BY O

AEANO HAT CANADIAN POSITION

ON NORTH KOREA GENERALLY PARALLELED U.S.'S BUT CANADA WAS TO
MAKE NO APPROACH TO GOI ON THIS ISSUE--LETTING JAPANESE
DO ALL THE TALKING. UK CHARGE DECIDED NEITHER TO REPORT
AUGUST FIRST MEETING NOR TO SEEK INSTRUCTIONS. NEW ZEALAND
AND BELGIAN CHARGES HAVE REPORTED MEETING BUT HAVE RECEIVED
NO INSTRUCTIONS.

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